MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, September 9, 2019
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER
Council Member Wood called the meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT
Councilmember Kathie Dunbar- arrived 5:36 p.m.
Councilmember Jeremy A. Garza
Councilmember Adam Hussain
Council Member Brian T. Jackson -excused
Councilmember Peter Spadafore
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley
Councilmember Jody Washington
Councilmember Carol Wood

OTHERS PRESENT
Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Eric Brewer, Council Internal Auditor
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney
Samantha Harkins, Deputy Mayor
Chris Mumby, Interim City IT Director
Brian McGrain, EDP Director
Heather Sumner, Deputy Chief City Attorney
Bob Trezise, LEAP
Kris Klein, LEAP
Karl Dorshimer, LEAP
Hannah Bryant, LEAP
Loretta Stanaway
Mary Reynolds
Berl Swartz, Lansing City Pulse

MINUTES
MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPITZLEY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 26, 2019 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.
**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Swartz spoke on a resolution asking the local Kroger stores to reconsider their recent policy change on free publications.

Council Member Spitzley stepped away from the meeting at 5:33 p.m.

Council President Wood informed Mr. Swartz the resolution will be addressed later on the agenda.

Committee Member Spitzley returned to the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

Ms. Stanaway spoke in support of comments made earlier by Mr. Swartz, then encouraged the Council to consider their budget priorities by not proposing raises, no new parks, but put funding towards infrastructure and additional LPD staffing.

Ms. Reynolds spoke in support of the Council addressing newspapers at the Kroger locations.

**Presentations:**

**Lansing Connect – Overview**

Council President Wood referred the Committee to a recent email from earlier in the day from Mr. Mumby on the questions they asked at earlier meetings.

Mr. Mumby admitted that the program is working but could work better, and then went through the memo, beginning with the common question “what does it mean to have an issue closed in Lansing Connect”. He explained the differences noting with Code Enforcement, it meant they have visited the site, have taken care of or have dispatched the contractor, and is closed when dispatched to a contractor. Mr. McGrain added they are working on software coding for multiple programs. Council Member Spitzley voiced her concern on the three different explanations in the memo on “closed”, asking how a resident would know what it is. She asked for an urgency on the integration and the language to be simplified. Mr. Mumby did confirm also that there is another element in plan, which is the human interaction at the department but admitted there is a fall in communication back to the resident and the departments can do a better part in communicating back to the residents and will require re-training. The Committee was informed at this time that the program will be updated with a duplication “detector”, so that if it finds a duplicate complaint, it will be lumped together, and the update will go to all people who filed a complaint. Council President Wood asked if there is an additional charge for this option, and Mr. Mumby stated there are no new charges, this is part of the newest enhancements. Mr. Mumby continued outlining the memo referenced earlier. The Committee held a brief discussion with Mr. Mumby on taking before and after photos, and Mr. Mumby acknowledged that sometimes it is not practical, and Mr. McGrain added that Code Enforcement does take photos for trash, and grass when a contractor is dispatched. Council Member Spitzley asked for an explanation on why it would not be practical for a before and after photo of a pot hole, and Mr. Mumby explained that when they inspect for a pot hole complaint they review the whole block and that could call for action to fill more than one pot hole on the street, and there is no way to connect each pothole to an address. Mr. Mumby was asked if the cost for the program has increased, and Mr. Mumby noted it was $34,800 and regarding a question on the program contractor being on site when it was implemented, he confirmed they were not. Council President Wood asked Mr. Mumby to report back on detail on if it is $34,800 per year on the license and if there was an upcharge to start. He was also asked to update the Committee on how long the City has had Lansing Connect. Council Member Hussain provided an example of when logging a complaint the options for type are too broad, so the residents are guessing on the topic and hoping it gets to
the right department. Mr. Mumby stated they could look into modifying the problem types, and Council President Wood asked them to include trash carts and recycle carts.

**Action**

**RESOLUTION – Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy Recycling Infrastructure Grant**

Council President Wood explained to the Committee that due to timing, the request needed to be addressed at this Committee and Council tonight.

Mr. Kilpatrick acknowledged the Committee for the fast track, and confirmed they found out just last week of the timing by the State due to their fiscal year carry forwards. He went on to explain the program is new, and the award is a $500,000 maximum, and the City jointly applied with East Lasing. The City will be the fiduciary, and they will be splitting the award with $240,000 each. Council Member Spadafore asked if the City would be replacing a truck or adding to the fleet and was told it was a replacement truck. Council President Wood asked if there was a City match and was told the purchase price for the City is $93,616 and there would be a match. He was then asked why the two municipalities picked two different trucks, and Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed the City purchased a vehicle they have purchased before because they are familiar with the make and model for future maintenance.

**MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPAFAORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES AND ENERGY RECYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.**

**Presentations:**

**Economic Development & Planning Updates including LEAP**

Mr. McGrain briefly outlined his department and their connection with LEAP. Mr. Trezise began briefly outlining what LEAP does then began a discussion on the façade grant program. Council President Wood brought an issue to his attention where there are multiple reviews involved, however it was not until a contractor was involved for the final project on a property when it was pointed out to the applicant they could not do what they were proposing and had received façade grant funds for. She asked what the process was and how that happened. Mr. McGrain stated that the issue had been addressed internally since that situation. Council Member Hussain asked if the funds were being awarded across the City, and Ms. Bryant confirmed, and noted they have just changed the criteria to include the Downtown District. Council Member Spitzley acknowledged the awards to downtown, however note there was a property in that district that has applied and was denied. Ms. Bryant requested the contact information and stated she would reach out to the property owner. Council Member Washington spoke in opposition to the grants being awarded to downtown businesses because the District already receives funds from other sources for their improvement. Ms. Bryant then distributed a map from 2018/2019 which pinpointed the locations of the awarded funds. Council Member Garza noted there was $165,000 and asked how much had been awarded. Ms. Bryant acknowledged in the last fiscal year it was $150,000 and was all used, however the current fiscal year process just began and nothing has been awarded. There are currently 25 applications and it is open until February. Council Member Garza asked the process if someone is denied or apply after the funds are spent, if they are first on the list for the next year. Mr. Trezise confirmed that do not make that consideration, and if the Council wants more funds to go towards the program they can add funds in the next budget season. Council Member Spitzley asked if there is criteria given for small businesses or non-profits. Mr. Trezise was not able to confirm, however did not that again, no funds have been awarded this year, but 25 have applied. He added that the first year, 2017/2018 it was hard to get applicants. Council asked that LEAP provide a list to Council of all applicants, and Mr. Trezise confirmed his office would provide and assured them that they have a criteria and standards
that the committee of expert on facades follows. Council Member Spadafore reminded Mr. Trezise that in the budget resolution for 2019/2020 there was no criteria listed in where the dollars were to be spend, and in the first year (2018/2019) it was noted Council needed to review the standards, and in also determined the unspent funds would roll over, however Council never saw or agreed to changing the criteria to expand the area to include the downtown. Mr. Trezise was asked who made that determination, and he stated the Mayor and Administration made the determination.

Council Member Spadafore stepped away at 6:32 p.m.

Council Member Hussain spoke in opposition to the change to include the Downtown District, noting also that the area already receives funding support from TIFA and Corridor Authorities.

Council Member Spadafore returned to the meeting at 6:33

He then asked if LEAP meets with applicants who get denied to explain why they did not qualify and were denied. Ms. Bryant assured the Committee that they attempt to meet with each applicant from the beginning so their applicants are complete.

Council Member Dunbar referenced the map of the 2018/2019 awarded grants.

Council Member Washington stepped away at 6:37 p.m.

Council Member Dunbar requested what Downtown boundaries were being added. Mr. Trezise stated to the Committee it was the District that ran from Pennsylvania to Capital and Saginaw to I-496.

Council Member Washington returned to the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Mr. Trezise spoke in support of including the Downtown District.

Council Member Spadafore clarified that he did not have an issue with funds being spent on businesses, his concern was the criteria was changed without deliberation with Council. He then asked LEPA if there was a possibility when writing the incentives, to have some case specific or area specific to help with those. Mr. Trezise referenced other communities where there are conditions in a developer agreement for specifics and conditions. Council Member Spitzley then asked for the number of businesses that have been brought into the City over the last year.

At this point Council President Wood asked Mr. Trezise and Mr. McGrain to attend a future meeting of the Committee, either October 14th or October 28th to continue the discussion. Council Member Garza asked for information at that meeting on how they attract and recruit businesses and also details on Opportunity Zones.

**Discussion/Action:**

**DISCUSSION – FY2020/2021 Budget Priorities**

Discussion will continue at the next two Committee meetings.

**Other**

**RESOLUTION – Newspapers at Kroger Site in Lansing City Limits**

Council President Wood noted the same request was made when Meijers changed their policy and Council did a resolution then as well.
MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR APPEALING TO THE KROGER LOCATIONS IN THE CITY LIMITS OF LANSING TO CONTINUE TO ALLOW DISTRIBUTION OF THE LANSING CITY PULSE AND PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

RESOLUTION – Set 2nd Public Hearing on Lansing Gateway Corridor Authority for October 14, 2019
MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO SET A SECOND PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE LANSING GATEWAY CORRIDOR AUTHORITY FOR OCTOBER 14, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

RESOLUTION – Set 2nd Public Hearing on S MLK Corridor Authority for October 14, 2019
MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO SET THE SECOND PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE S MLK CORRIDOR AUTHORITY FOR OCTOBER 14, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

ADJOURN
The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted by,
Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary
Lansing City Council
Approved by the Committee on September 23, 2019